

# Dell Rapids Granite Water Tower

Minnehaha County

After an 1888 fire in downtown Dell Rapids destroyed the south side of main street, the city determined that a new water system was needed. In 1894, the tower was built on a hill at 10th and Orleans Streets.

Making use of local quarries, the structure was constructed using Sioux quartzite, an incredibly durable, purple-pink-red stone found in a vein which runs through southeastern South Dakota and southwestern Minnesota. The water was obtained from a spring near the Sioux River and was pumped from a large reservoir, which was dug from solid rock. The exterior of the pump house was also built using quartzite. Being 45 feet tall and sitting on a hill, the tower's excellent water pressure was more than sufficient for all local purposes.

The Dell Rapids Granite Water Tower was in operation until about 1960 when a new tower was built. It is the only structure of its type in South Dakota and one of a dwindling number in the United States. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in March 1984.

